

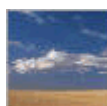
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Introduction

Introduction

Country of Birth identifies the country in which a person was born. It can be used to indicate whether or not a person is an immigrant and the country group to which they belong. Country of Birth variables are used to assess the ethnic and cultural composition of the Australian population.

Country of Birth variables are often more useful when used with other variables to measure

diversity in its broader sense, for example Language, and Religious Affiliation. Country of Birth can also be used to assess and monitor service needs of population groups within Australia, in conjunction with variables such as Year of Arrival in Australia and Proficiency in Spoken English.

Country of Birth is included within the minimum core indicators for use in measuring cultural and linguistic diversity.

Underlying Concepts

Underlying Concepts

Name of Standard

The name of the standard is Country of Birth.

Definition of Standard

Nominal definition

Nominally, Country of Birth is defined as the country in which a person was born.

Country of Birth is an attribute of the counting unit 'person'.

Operational definition

Operationally, the Country of Birth standard contains three distinct variables; Country of Birth of Person, which is the country identified as being the one in which the person was born. Country of Birth of Father, and Country of Birth of Mother, is the country identified as being the one in which the person's parents were born.

Discussion of conceptual issues

Country of Birth identifies the country in which a person was born (or the country in which the person's parents were born). It can also be used to indicate whether or not someone was born in Australia or is an immigrant.

Prior to 2012, Country of Birth of Person, Country of Birth of Father and Country of Birth of Mother were all available as separate standards. They have now been merged into the one 'Country of Birth' standard.

Classification and Coding

Classification and Coding

The standard classification and the classification criteria

The Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC) (cat. no. 1269.0) is used when collecting, aggregating and disseminating Country of Birth data.

Three classification criteria are used to form the categories of the classification structure:

- the geographic proximity of countries
- the similarity of countries in terms of social, cultural, economic and political characteristics
- the desirability that groups of countries lie within a single geographic continent.

The classification has a three level hierarchical structure:

- the third and most detailed level of the classification consists of 255 base or third level units (countries). Included in the third level units are four 'not elsewhere classified' (nec) categories, containing entities that are not listed separately in the classification
- the second level of the classification comprises 27 minor groups, which are groups of geographically proximate countries
- the first and most general level of the classification comprises nine major groups, which are formed by aggregating geographically proximate minor groups.

The code structure

One, two and four digit codes are assigned to the first, second and third level units of the classification respectively. The first digit identifies the major group in which each minor group or country is contained. The first two digits taken together identify the minor group in which each country is contained. The four digit codes represent each of the countries.

The following example demonstrates the code structure for the countries included within the Minor Group Southern Europe, which is one of the three minor groups of the Major Group Southern and Eastern Europe.

3 SOUTHERN AND EASTERN EUROPE

31 Southern Europe

3101 Andorra
3102 Gibraltar
3103 Holy See
3104 Italy
3105 Malta
3106 Portugal
3107 San Marino
3108 Spain

Residual categories and codes

Any geographic area within the region described by a minor group, which is not separately identified in the classification, can be included in the residual or 'not elsewhere classified' (nec) category. These 'nec' categories have codes ending with the digits '99'.

An example of a 'not elsewhere classified' (nec) category and code is:

8299 South America, nec

Supplementary codes

Supplementary codes include 'not further defined' (nfd), 'inadequately described' and 'not stated' responses.

An example of a 'not further defined' category and code is:

3100 - Southern Europe, not further defined (nfd)

Scope of the standard

The Country of Birth standard applies to all persons.

Application of the classification to other variables

The SACC can be used to classify other variables such as, Country of Residence, Country of Future Residence, Country of Citizenship, Country of Embarkation, Country of Disembarkation and Country of Last Residence.

Coding procedures

All Country of Birth responses are coded to the SACC (cat. no. 1269.0) using the guidelines detailed in that publication. Responses are matched with entries in the SACC coding index to determine the correct classification code.

Coding indexes

The SACC coding index is a comprehensive list of the most probable responses to questions relating to countries and their correct classification codes. It enables responses to be coded accurately.

For further details regarding the classification and coding, see the SACC (cat. no. 1269.0) on the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au).

Collection Methods

Collection Methods

Standard question module

There are two standard question modules for Country of Birth:

- The question module for Detailed Data obtains the most comprehensive responses and data on Country of Birth. There are two alternatives for the question module for Detailed Data, which may be used depending on space and cost considerations:
 - Alternative one: a set of tick box selected responses and an 'Other - please specify' response category for writing a country not specified in the tick box list
 - Alternative two: a tick box for Australia and an 'Other - please specify' to write in the name of a country, if not born in Australia.
- The question module for Minimum Data only contains the tick box options 'Australia' and 'Other country'. It does not collect detailed data on countries of birth other than Australia.

Question module for Detailed Data

Alternative one

This standard question module is designed to collect detailed data on Country of Birth and is recommended for household based surveys, statistical and administrative collections.

The applicable tick boxes for the variables Country of Birth of Person, Country of Birth of Father and Country of Birth of Mother are included in this Country of Birth standard.

- The standard question module for obtaining detailed data, alternative one, for the variable Country of Birth of Person follows:

Q1. In which country [were you] [was the person] [was (name)] born?

Australia	q
England	q
New Zealand	q
India	q
Italy	q
Vietnam	q
Philippines	q
South Africa	q
Scotland	q
Malaysia	q
Other - please specify.....	

- The standard question module for obtaining detailed data, alternative one, for the variable Country of Birth of Father follows:

Q1. In which country was [your] [the person's] [(name)'s] father born ?

Australia	q
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England	q
New Zealand	q
India	q
Italy	q
Vietnam	q
Philippines	q
South Africa	q
Scotland	q
Malaysia	q
Other - please specify.....	

- The standard question module for obtaining detailed data, alternative one, for the variable Country of Birth of Mother follows:

Q1. In which country was [your] [the person's] [(name)'s] mother born ?

Australia	q
England	q
New Zealand	q
India	q
Italy	q
Vietnam	q
Philippines	q
South Africa	q
Scotland	q
Malaysia	q
Other - please specify.....	

The countries in this module are included primarily on the basis of their statistical significance within Australia. Although China is a country in which a large proportion of Australia's population were born, it is excluded from the list because it is not the only country in which 'Chinese' people may be born and, if included, may bias responses. For example, by including China in the list, people born in Hong Kong (a Special Administrative Region of China) may simply tick the China box option, when they should specify Hong Kong in the 'other' option.

The list of countries provided with the question modules for the variables Country of Birth of Person, Country of Birth of Father and Country of Birth of Mother have been taken from the top ten most reported Census 2011 responses for Country of Birth of Person.

Alternative two

The standard question module, alternative two, for obtaining detailed data for the variable Country of Birth of Person follows:

Q1. In which country [were you] [was the person] [was (name)] born ?

Australia	q
Other - please specify:	

The standard question module, alternative two, for obtaining detailed data for the variable Country of Birth of Father follows:

Q1. In which country was [your] [the person's] [(name)'s] father born ?

Australia	q
Other - please specify:	

The standard question module, alternative two, for obtaining detailed data for the variable Country of Birth of Mother follows:

Q1. In which country was [your] [the person's] [(name)'s] mother born ?

Australia	q
Other - please specify:	

Question module for minimum data

The standard question module for Minimum Data for the variable Country of Birth of Person follows:

Q1. In which country [were you] [was the person] [was (name)] born ?

Australia	q
Other Country	q

The standard question module for Minimum Data for the variable Country of Birth of Father follows:

Q1. In which country was [your] [the person's] [(name)'s] father born ?

Australia	q
Other Country	q

The standard question module for Minimum Data for the variable Country of Birth of Mother follows:

Q1. In which country was [your] [the person's] [(name)'s] mother born ?

Australia	q
Other Country	q

This question provides no information regarding the range of countries of birth. It is suitable for statistical and administrative collections, which have space constraints or where there is no requirement for detailed data on Country of Birth.

Each alternative to the question module may be accompanied by a brief explanatory note giving detailed instructions about how to answer the Country of Birth questions. The explanatory note can be included with the chosen question module or in supplementary documentation. The explanatory note is in [Appendix A](#).

Standard input categories

Input categories for Detailed Data

The base level units of the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC) (cat. no.

1269.0), represented by their four digit codes, are the standard input categories for the Country of Birth question module for Detailed Data.

Input categories for Minimum Data

The standard input categories for the Country of Birth question modules for Minimum Data are:

- Australia
- Other country

Outputs

Output

Standard output categories

Output categories for detailed data

Included here are two examples of the standard output categories, comprising minor groups and countries, of the nine major groups within the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC) (cat. no. 1269.0):

Example One:

- Oceania and Antarctica
 - Australia (includes External Territories)
 - Australia
 - Norfolk Island
 - Polynesia (excludes Hawaii)
 - Fiji
 - Samoa

Example Two:

- North Africa and the Middle East
 - North Africa
 - Algeria
 - Egypt
 - Libya
 - Morocco
 - Sudan
 - Tunisia
 - Western Sahara
 - Spanish North Africa
 - South Sudan
 - Middle East
 - Lebanon
 - Turkey

The hierarchical structure of the SACC (cat. no. 1269.0) allows users the flexibility to output statistics at the level of the classification which best suits their requirements. Data can be presented at major group, minor group, or the base or country level. If necessary, significant countries within a minor group can be presented separately while the remaining countries within the minor group are aggregated. For example (see above), the third level categories 'Morocco' or 'Tunisia' can be separately identified as output categories within the 'North Africa' Minor Group, with the remaining third level categories in this minor group aggregated into an 'Other' North Africa category. The same principle can be adopted to highlight significant minor groups within a major group.

For a more detailed and complex analysis it is recommended that data be captured, classified and stored at the base level of the classification wherever possible. It allows the greatest flexibility, enables more detailed analysis, facilitates comparisons with previous data using different classifications, and preserves information that provides maximum flexibility for future use of the data.

Output categories for minimum data

The standard output categories for the Country of Birth question modules, for minimum data are:

- Born in Australia
- Born overseas

Supporting variables

Country of Birth does not require any supporting variables.

Measurement Issues & Related Classifications

Measurement Issues & Related Classifications

Measurement issues

To maintain coding consistency in all applications, it is recommended that each country response be coded according to national boundaries existing at the time of data collection. Any response to a country or region that has undergone a name or boundary change since a person's time of birth, is coded to the most current name of that country at the time of data collection. For example, The Netherlands Antilles was dissolved in 2010 resulting in the new countries of 'Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba', 'Curacao' and 'Sint Maarten (Dutch part)'. People responding with 'Netherlands Antilles' are now coded to 'Caribbean, not further defined' (a not further defined category of 'Americas').

Constraints apply to the variables contained within the Country of Birth standard. For example, standard errors or confidentiality concerns may affect the collection or output of data for some of the categories at the lower levels of the classification.

Related classifications

Correspondences between SACC 1st Edition and SACC 2nd Edition Revision 1, 2011 are accessed through the data cubes of the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC) (cat. no. 1269.0). A correspondence table between the SACC and the United Nations Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use for conversion of Australian data for international comparisons is also available.

Appendix A - Explanatory Script

Appendix A - Explanatory Script

This script is a guide for the question modules for the variables Country of Birth of Person, Country of Birth of Father and Country of Birth of Mother.

There are two standard question modules for Country of Birth, which have the same structure for each of the three Country of Birth variables. These include a question module for Detailed Data and a question module for Minimum Data:

Question module for Detailed Data:

There are two alternatives for the question module for Detailed Data:

1. Alternative one: a set of tick box selected responses (pick list) and an 'Other - please specify' response category.

For interview based questionnaires, the interviewer marks the box for the country of birth the respondent identifies for the person or the person's parents. If the respondent identifies a country not in the tick box list, the interviewer can write the country name in the 'Other - please specify' category.

For self enumerated questionnaires, the respondent can choose the country of birth for the person or the person's parents from the tick box, if the country is specified. The 'Other - please specify' response category provides a space for the respondent to write the name of a country if it is not specified in the tick box.

2. Alternative two: a tick box for Australia and an 'Other - please specify'

For interview based questionnaires, the interviewer marks the box for Australia, if the respondent identifies this as the country of birth of the person or the person's parents. If the respondent identifies a country other than Australia, the interviewer can write the country name in the 'Other - please specify' category.

For self enumerated questionnaires, the respondent marks the tick box for Australia, if the person or their parents were born in Australia. If born outside Australia, the respondent chooses the 'Other - please specify category', which provides a space for the respondent to write in the name of the country not specified in the tick box.

- If there is a need for detailed information but space constraints are a consideration, then the tick boxes except the tick box for Australia, are not required. This will incur additional coding costs as each overseas born response will need to be matched with an entry in the SACC coding index.

- In response to the country of birth of father and mother question module, if adopted or has step or foster parents, the person provides the country of birth of their birth parents, if known. If a birth parent's country of birth is not known, the person leaves the response to the question blank.

Question module for Minimum Data:

There is one alternative for question module for Minimum Data. In this question module there are only two tick box options; 'Australia' and 'Other country'.

For interview based questionnaires, the interviewer marks the box for Australia if the respondent identifies this as the country of birth of the person or the person's parents. If the respondent identifies a country other than Australia, the interviewer marks the box for 'Other country'.

For self enumerated questionnaires, the respondent marks the tick box for 'Australia', if the person or the person's parents were born in Australia or marks the box for 'Other country' if not born in Australia.

Appendix B - References

Appendix B - References

- Census Dictionary (cat. no. 2901.0), 2011
- ABS Views on Census Classification (cat. no. 2012.0), 1996
- Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC), Second Edition (cat. no. 1269.0), 2011
- Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity (cat. no. 1289.0), 1999
- Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Responding to Diversity: Progress in implementing the Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society, DIMA, Canberra, 1999

About this Release

The Country of Birth standard identifies the country in which a person or the person's father and/or mother were born. Country of Birth may be used with a range of other variables to measure the ethnic and cultural composition of the Australian population. The variables provide a means for standardising the way Country of Birth data are collected and disseminated.

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